



THE CADET SYSTEM IN SCHOOLS.

There are Canadians who object to the introduction of cadet drill into the schools because they think it develops a spirit of militarism. Experience has proved that this view is incorrect. Boys thoroughly enjoy cadet work without any direct consciousness of its relationship to war. The boy thinks only of the immediate effort, the immediate discipline, and the immediate enjoyment, and not of any ultimate and distant possibility. This well known psychological principle has a most important bearing on the whole question of the desirability of introducing cadet work into the schools.

It should be remembered in this connection that soldiers do not cause war. Grave dissensions between nations result from differences between the political and financial leaders of different countries, not from anything the soldiers of the rival countries say or do. The soldier is not the war-monger. He is more likely to become the war-victim.

There are men who attack those who advocate cadet work in the schools, and who charge them with approving of "conscription." This charge has absolutely no foundation. The cadet system is a rational substitute for conscription. It avoids all the evils of conscription, and it develops the best elements of human power and character, while at the same time it secures all the supposed advantages of conscription in the most natural and the most thoroughly effective way. Those who attack the principle of universal training are evidently not aware of the fact that the law of Canada now recognizes the principle that all men, with comparatively few exceptions, are responsible for the defence of their country. Between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, inclusive, men are now, by law, liable to be called upon when necessary to do military service in the defence of their country. There is no logical basis for good citizenship but the one that recognizes a man's duties

to his country. There is no proper system of training in citizenship that does not make all children—girls as well as boys—conscious of their responsibilities as individual units in their country. Boys should understand that they will become responsible for the defence of their homes and their country when they reach the age of eighteen. They should be trained to use their influence to avoid war; but the fundamental principle is that they are liable by law to give their services to defend their country when necessary in return for the privileges they enjoy as citizens.

It is an indefensible moral ideal that a man should enjoy the many rights of citizenship without recognizing his responsibility for the duties of citizenship.

The advocates of a Cadet System do not wish any change in the law which makes every man between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years responsible for the defence of his country. They do, however, regard it as a grievous mistake to make all men within these age limits liable for military service, as the law now does, without providing in some way for their training in order that they may be able to render efficient service without the terrible sacrifice of life that would naturally result from the vain attempts of masses of untrained men to perform the duty required of them.

Universal liability for defence service is unquestionably right. This being true, it clearly follows that all men should, in some way, be prepared to perform the duty laid upon them by their country. The country that demands universal service without providing some adequate system of universal training for the men on whom it properly lays the duty is culpably negligent.

The question to be solved really is: What is the most effective and most economical system for giving universal training?

The Cadet System has the following merits from the national standpoint:—

1. It is given at a time when lessons learned by operative processes are never forgotten. Drill is an operative process. Operative processes are not recorded in the memories, but in the lives of students.

2. It costs the country less to train the coming citizens in the schools than in any other way.

3. It interferes with the ordinary duties of men less than any other possible plan to have the foundation of military drill given in the schools.

4. It qualifies the men of the country for more complete military training in much shorter time than it would take to train them without cadet training in the schools. Men in later years will find their training in military drill to be mainly reviewing the work they did in school instead of having to learn the whole work at maturity.

5. Boys like military drill. From twelve to sixteen years of age, they generally like it better than baseball or lacrosse, and because of this fact, it may be used so as to produce the most beneficial effects upon character.

6. A Cadet is not a soldier. He takes no oath of military service. He is a boy who, for his own good and the good of his country, is disciplined through wholesome exercises, some of which have had a military origin, and some have not. Any possible objection to a Cadet Corps applies with equal force to a Boys' Brigade.

The following are the general advantages of Cadet training to the Cadets themselves:—

1. It provides an excellent setting-up drill for boys physically. Boys whose teachers, parents and physicians have tried earnestly to train to sit and to stand properly without success, in most cases respond at once to drill and become new physical types. Drill exercises are good for the general physical development of a boy, but they produce better effects than additional strength and improved health. They give a more dignified bearing, a more graceful carriage of the body and a more definite step.

It is not possible to train a boy so that throughout his life he will stand erect and walk with more grace and dignity without, at the same time, influencing him morally for good. The physical, the intellectual and the moral natures react on each other. They should be trained in harmony, in order that each individual may

reach his best development in the three departments of his nature.

Every parent in Canada who has had sons at the Royal Military College, and every man who has met boys before and after their course there, has recognized the extraordinary improvement in health, strength, stature and physique which has followed that course.

Every man, whatever his party politics, who has seen the military training in Germany or in Sweden or Switzerland, testifies to the improvement in health, strength, bearing and self-respect which has attended it.

2. It trains boys to be promptly, definitely, intelligently and cheerfully obedient. There can be no diversity of opinion in regard to a training that develops prompt, definite, intelligent and cheerful obedience to regularly constituted authority. There is no other school process that develops these types of obedience in a boy's character so naturally, so effectively and so permanently as drill.

3. It reveals law to a boy, not as a restraining force merely, but as a guiding force, by enabling him to achieve much more perfect results under law than he could possibly achieve without law. Without the laws that govern its movements, a Company or a Regiment would be an unrelated mass of individuals or a mob; under law, it is a perfect organization, capable of executing a very complicated series of movements accurately and unitedly, not as individuals but as an organic unity. One of the most essential elements of true moral training is reverence for law as a guiding force. To understand "the perfect law of liberty," and have a true consciousness of what is meant by "liberty under law," is one of the strongest foundations of character. This recognition of law gives a man a deeper and broader conception of his true attitude to his fellow-men and to his duty.

4. It develops a boy's genuine patriotism; not an arrogant or offensive consciousness of national importance, but a genuine faith in himself and his country. Such a faith is one of the basic elements of a strong and balanced moral character. In many parts of Canada, a

great many foreign boys are making a new home. There is no other process by which they can be made proud of their King, their new country, their flag, and the institutions it represents so quickly and so thoroughly as by wearing the King's uniform, and keeping step to patriotic British-Canadian music behind the Union Jack as part of a patriotic organization, along with British-Canadian boys. In this way a patriotic spirit enters a boy's heart and life.

3. Drill does more than develop the spirit of patriotism. It reveals to a boy his value as a citizen, and, therefore, his responsibility for the performance of his duties as a citizen not merely in defence of his country, but in the highest development of his country in all departments of national life.

6. Cadet drill helps to make a boy executive, and executive training is the training that gives real practical value to all other kinds of training. One of the greatest causes of failure in the schools of the past was the lack of executive training.

7. All modern advances in education are based on a reverent recognition of the value of the individual soul, and of the supreme need of its development. Drill gives a boy an opportunity to learn the value of individual training and of individual effort by experience, better than any other school work except organized play, or organized work in Manual Training or some other form of employment. Each boy knows from the first that the standing of the Company depends on the work of each individual boy. He knows also that his failure brings discredit on his Company. This knowledge will, in due time, reveal to him the need of his life work to aid his community and his country to their highest development.

8. Drill defines in a boy's mind the need of active co-operation with his fellows—boys and men. It is very important that each man shall become conscious of the value of his own individuality. It is much more important that he learn his supreme value as a social unit, as one working with and for humanity. The true ideals of social unity and social relationship cannot be communicated vitally to children or to adults by words

alone. They must be defined by action; by united effort under directive law for the achievement of a common purpose. There is no other form of co-operative activity that so clearly reveals to a boy the need of putting forth his best efforts in harmony with his comrades as drill.

9. Drill trains a boy to be careful of his language and manners, and to value neatness and cleanliness in his clothing and person, and thus develops a conscious personal dignity, which is an important element in character.

That our system of government is democratic quadruples the force of arguments in favour of military drill in schools; for the system tends to a disregard for authority, a due respect for which is restored by a reasonable system of universal military training. The training is therefore beneficial, even desirable, in itself intrinsically and subjectively, quite apart from any outbreak of war, or any need for putting it into practice literally, and it is not discredited or rendered useless though the last and worst occasion for it never arise.

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